

NHHS's "Hello, My Baby!" is a Dazzlingly Dreamy Delight!
written by Isabella Dym, a junior at University High School

To succeed as a song-plugger in Tin Pan Alley, Betty Gold disguises herself as a boy, Buddy, leading to a series of complicated, wildly entertaining events as she navigates romance with Mickey McKee, who happens to be her male persona's arch-nemesis.

Gabby Posse as Betty Gold brilliantly captures her headstrong, passionate nature while delivering outstandingly clear, resonant vocals. When in disguise, she seamlessly switches to masculine movements and a deep voice, presenting a vivid juxtaposition with her real, graceful physicality. In "I Don't Care", her longing glances, restrained posture, and dynamic, emotional singing poignantly convey her vulnerable longing, heightening the irony with the lyrics.

Nicholas Earnhart wonderfully characterizes Mickey McKee's unrelenting determination that surrenders only to his love of Betty. His raised chin and puffed chest convincingly highlight his strong ambition, and when Ethel fires him, he stomps and flails in a comedically exaggerated tantrum that impactfully reflects his helplessness. His expert comedic timing shines whenever he wrongly guesses the relationship between Betty and Buddy, his face scrunched in utter, hilarious confusion, pacing angrily in authentic hurt.

With flirtatious shimmys, strong vocals, and flourishing gestures, Heather Rivard commands attention as the bold, authoritative Ethel Coots. Meanwhile, Henry Bergeron persuasively embodies the awkward shyness of her husband, Bert Coots, through hunched shoulders, avoidant eye contact, and intentionally hesitant vocals. The couple's dynamic in "You'd Be Surprised" sincerely portrays their genuine, though unexpected, love for each other, while their starkly different personalities craft a compellingly comedic moment.

The orchestra excellently builds the atmosphere with incredible technique and understanding of the style of music. The musicians employ skillful syncopations demonstrating a complex understanding of ragtime extending beyond the sheet music while masterfully emphasizing the melody even in complicated, fast-paced chords. Jack Arrow's conducting effectively strengthens the musicality of the show; by following the actors, he allows for a natural tempo that considers organic timing and flow while enabling singers to make creative decisions regarding rhythm.

The costume team impressively reinforces class distinctions and character personalities. The costume design for Johnny Giovanni (Claire McNamer) features a bright, scarlet red shirt that meaningfully encapsulates the character's intimidating, violent nature. The striped vest insightfully communicates Johnny's formal professionalism, while the colorful paisley tie cleverly hints at a more non-serious, playful nature.

Don't be "Always Chasing Rainbows"chase tickets for this lively, heartfelt love letter to musical theatre!